

INDIANA

HomeTown Competitiveness Program

A Come-Back/Give-Back Approach to Rural Community Building

Presented by:



INDIANA OFFICE OF
Community & Rural Affairs
Where Rural Matters



Committed to the future of rural communities.

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES



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Pilot Community Application Packet

PHASE I

Pilot Community Application Packet includes:

- *Phase I Background Information Sheet*
- *Pilot Community Questionnaire*

PHASE I BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET

INTRODUCTION

The Indiana - HomeTown Competitiveness Program (Indiana-HTC) harnesses the power of the nationally recognized community development program entitled: “HomeTown Competitiveness”. Focusing on four pillars, this program will help communities by:

- Mobilizing local leaders and building community civic capacity;
- Energizing local entrepreneurs to build a strong economy;
- Capturing wealth transfer to raise development dollars; and
- Attracting young people to strengthen community demographics.

Why participate in the Indiana - HomeTown Competitiveness pilot program? There are many reasons your community should consider the program:

- Since 2003, HTC has received national recognition and awards from organizations such as the National Rural Funders Collaborative, the International Community Development Society and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.
- The Indiana - HomeTown Competitiveness program will:
 - a. Focus on the basics necessary for building and sustaining a robust development agenda. The program empowers more people for leadership and identifies more dollars to be mobilized in support of an aggressive community and economic development strategy.
 - b. Provide a development framework that can help make more things happen to move rural communities forward.
- The opportunity to collaborate with a statewide “Indiana Resource Team” in order to create a customized strategic framework for your community. The core organizations coordinating the Indiana Resource Team include:
 - a. Ball State University’s “Building Better Communities”;
 - b. Indiana Grantmakers Alliance;
 - c. Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs;
 - d. Indiana Rural Development Council;
 - e. Purdue University’s Center for Regional Development/Extension Service; and
 - f. USDA - Rural Development.

The entire Indiana -HTC program consists of three major phases of work:

- PHASE I ASSESSMENT- Phase I (typically four months to complete) consists of the community exploring the HTC process, conducting local assessments of development history, context, issues and assets as well as creating customized strategic opportunities.
- PHASE II STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT and IMPLEMENTATION - Phase II (typically 12 - 18 months to complete) takes the customized strategic opportunities created in the Phase I Assessment and creates a specific strategic action plan. Most communities will want to pursue Phase II if the Phase I Assessment proved successful. Phase II requires a larger mobilization of community effort that will include the identification of a local Community Coordinator, an overall steering committee and four task forces (entrepreneurship, leadership, youth engagement and charitable assets).
- PHASE III SUSTAINING SUCCESS- Phase III sustains the successes from Phase I and II and moves all of the various strategies into action.

PHASE I ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES, DELIVERABLES & COSTS

Outcomes and Deliverables:

Communities chosen to participate in the Phase I Assessment can anticipate the following outcomes and deliverables:

- Each community will have the opportunity to explore the potential value of the Indiana - HTC development framework and determine if participating in the pilot is a good fit for their community.
- Community teams (consisting of five members) will have the opportunity to participate in a 2 ½ day training in order to learn more about the Indiana - HTC process.
- Communities will receive a variety of technical assistance services from the six core organizations of the Indiana Resource Team. These services will also include in-kind resources from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs.
- Each pilot community will have the opportunity to host an Indiana - HTC “*Kick-Off Celebration*” that will launch the beginning of the assessment process.
- In collaboration with the Indiana Resource Team, each community will:
 - a. Create a baseline community/economic development assessment with preliminary reviews of key community assets and strategies - including entrepreneurship as an economic development strategy, leadership engagement and development, youth engagement and attraction, and charitable assets as a resource mobilization strategy;
 - b. Develop a clear set of community/economic development recommendations for their consideration; and
 - c. Conduct an *Opportunity Retreat* in order to create and develop their customized strategic opportunities.

Phase I Assessment Investments:

What are the investments for the Phase I program and how will they be shared?

The Indiana - HTC program is not a grant program, but rather a collaborative effort between the Indiana Resource Team and the pilot communities. The total investment for the Phase I Assessment will be shared by both the Indiana Resource Team and each of the pilot communities. Overall the investment activities include:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Investments</u>
• 2 1/2 Day Training (Jan. 28-30, 2009).....	\$ 26,000
Of which (assuming a maximum of 12 communities participating):	
a. Community Investment.....	\$500 (per 5 member team)
b. Indiana Resource Team Investment.....	\$20,000
• Phase I Assessment.....	\$264,000
Of which (assuming a maximum of 12 communities participating):	
a. Community Investment.....	\$7,000 (per community)
b. Indiana Resource Team Investment.....	\$180,000
• Total Project Investment.....	\$290,000
Of which (assuming a maximum of 12 communities participating):	
a. Community Investment.....	\$7,500 (per community)
b. Indiana Resource Team Investment.....	\$200,000

PHASE I ASSESSMENT PROCESS, TIMELINE & BENCHMARKS

Phase I Assessment Process:

The approach the Indiana Resource Team will utilize to engage communities in the application process would be best characterized as a “conversation”. This conversation will be designed to provide opportunities for both the Indiana Resource Team and communities to exchange ideas around the key principles associated with the Indiana - HomeTown Competitiveness program.

This conversational approach will consist of the following process, timeline and benchmarks:

- **October 1, 2008: Pilot Community Application Packet** - On October 1, Pilot Community Applications were made available to communities interested in participating in the IHTC Program. Applications should be returned no later than 5:00 pm. on Friday October 31, 2008.
- **Dec. 1–12, 2008: Pilot Community Site Visitations** - The Indiana Resource Team will review the submitted applications with the goal of identifying potential communities for site visitations. **As a result of this application review, not all communities will receive a site visit.** During these visits, members of the Indiana Resource Team and community leaders will have an opportunity to continue the conversation about the program and its potential impact on the community.
- **Jan. 28-30, 2009: Indiana - HTC Academy** - Following the site visitations, the Indiana Resource Team will invite 6 – 12 communities to participate in the Indiana - HTC Academy. Scheduled from January 28 (12:00 p.m. EST) - January 30 (4:00 p.m. EST) 2009, community teams (five members per team) will be required to participate in this three day academy.
- **February 9, 2009: Pilot Communities Finalized** - The final conversation between the Indiana Resource Team and the communities will occur following the conclusion of the three day training. Communities will then have the opportunity to make a final decision regarding whether the Indiana - HomeTown Competitiveness program is a good fit for their community.

- **February 2009: Phase I Assessment Preparation** - During February, each community will prepare for the Phase I Assessment. Activities will include the organization of a Community Steering Committee, local and support staff recruited, volunteered or assigned and the Indiana - HTC “*Kick-Off Celebration*”.
- **March 2009: Phase I Baseline Assessment Launched** - During the month of March, each community will begin implementation of the Phase I Assessment activities. These activities will include: a baseline assessment starting with a data review, key interviews and focus groups. The focus groups will be facilitated with Indiana Resource Team members working in each of the four HTC pillars.
- **April – May 2009: Phase I Baseline Assessment Completed** - In April, the community will complete the Phase I baseline assessment. Then, utilizing the data collected, the community will develop a preliminary set of strategic recommendations.
- **June 2009: “Opportunity Retreat”** - Following their work in April, each community will conduct an “*Opportunity Retreat*” in order to begin formulating the community’s customized strategic opportunities as well as decide whether to move forward on the Phase II Strategic Development and Implementation.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Indiana - HomeTown Competitiveness is an exciting and innovative program that focuses on both community and economic development. The program creates a statewide Indiana Resource Team that will work with the pilot communities to create customized strategic opportunities. To assist the Indiana Resource Team, each community will be asked to respond to a questionnaire. The overall goal of the Pilot Community Questionnaire is to provide an opportunity to learn more about each community and their interest in implementing Indiana - HomeTown Competitiveness. In addition, this questionnaire will also serve as the basis for selecting some communities to continue the conversation through a site visitation.

Evaluation Criteria for Questionnaire and Site Visitations:

The Indiana Resource Team will be evaluating communities by utilizing their responses to the Community Questionnaire, information gathered during site visitations, and the following criteria:

- Does the community have identifiable leadership and demonstrated commitment to the process?
- Is the community leadership in need of a new and innovative approach to community and economic development?
- Does the community understand the importance of integrating the essential elements of mobilizing local leaders, capturing transfer of wealth, energizing entrepreneurs and attracting young people into their development plan?
- How will the community manage issues of inclusiveness (such as gender, race, age and economic diversity)?
- Is the community prepared to invest the needed resources to implement the Indiana - HTC program?
- Will the community employ the concept of “collaboration” to implement the pilot program? Does the community have a history of working collaboratively?
- Has the community engaged the appropriate mix of organizational partners to implement and sustain the pilot program? Major partners might include representatives from:
 - a. Local or county economic development organization;
 - b. Municipal or county elected officials;
 - c. Financial institutions;
 - d. Community foundation or other philanthropic organizations;
 - e. Youth organizations;
 - f. Nonprofit organizations (such as social services, arts or faith-based organizations);
 - g. Educational systems (such as local school systems, community colleges, universities or other education institutions like the Extension Service);
 - h. Chamber of commerce; and
 - i. Other communities (taking a regional approach to the Indiana - HTC program).

- Has the community submitted the required signed letter from each major partner indicating their interest in the Indiana - HTC program?

Administrative Information:

- Please submit one original and eight copies of the Pilot Community Questionnaire and signed letters to the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, One North Capitol Ave, Suite 600, Indianapolis, IN 46204.
- All Pilot Community Questionnaires and signed partner letters **must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 31, 2008.**

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PILOT COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE

No community, big or small, is guaranteed a future in today's global society. Each community must take the responsibility to create economic and social relevance in the dynamic and rapidly changing world we live in today. Indiana - HomeTown Competitiveness (Indiana - HTC) will provide the process and support necessary for moving to the next level, but it is your community's commitment, hard work and investment that will make it real. This "Pilot Community Questionnaire" is designed to begin a specific conversation between your community and the Indiana - HTC Resource Team. **The Indiana - HTC Resource Team invites your community to be part of this exciting conversation.**

Name of Community (ies): _____
Name of Contact Person: _____
Address: _____

Telephone: _____ **Email:** _____

In order for the Indiana - HTC Resource Team to learn more about your interest in this pilot initiative, please review and respond to the following questions:

1. **Define the "community" to be served by your Indiana - HTC project [geographic area, specific community (ies)]?**
2. **Why would the community benefit from this new innovative approach that focuses on both community and economic development?**
3. **Regarding the Indiana - HTC program, what do you think are the potential opportunities and challenges for your community?**
4. **Assertive inclusiveness is an important aspect of the Indiana - HTC philosophy. With this in mind, what is your plan to implement gender, race, age, and economic diversity?**

5. Please list the potential major partners who would be involved in helping to create and implement your Indiana - HTC program. Please provide a signed letter from each partner indicating their interest in the pilot program.

6. Does your community have an active community/economic development plan?
Yes _____ No _____

If yes please respond to the following:

- a. Does your plan address/include the four elements of HomeTown Competitiveness (mobilizing local leaders, capturing wealth transfer, energizing entrepreneurship and attracting young people?
- b. How do you envision the Indiana - HTC strategy being incorporated into your current community/economic development plan? Please explain?
- c. Will you be competing for community planning resources or initiatives in order to implement Indiana - HTC? Please explain.
- d. To your knowledge, have major state or federal grants been obtained and/or invested in your current plan? If yes, please identify them.
- e. Regarding the implementation of the existing plan, share with us two examples of how your community works collaboratively, both internally as well as outside your community?

If no, please respond to the following:

- a. Please share with us reasons why your community does not have an active community/economic development plan?
- b. Please identify the different community resources that might be created and invested in implementing the Indiana - HTC planning process?
- c. Share with us some recent examples of how your community works collaboratively with organizations within as well as outside your community?

The Indiana Resource Team would like to express appreciation to you and your community for the interest shown in this exciting and innovative approach to community and economic development. If you have questions, please contact Andrew Fennig at the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs, 317-232-8776 or AFennig@ocra.IN.gov.